

# THE REFORMER.

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Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth. Jeremiah v. 1.

## *Present state of the CHRISTIAN WORLD, so called.*

Whoever looks to any of the numerous sects of professing Christians in this day, to be built up in the *most holy faith*, and places his *dependence for salvation* on an adherence to their rules and dogmas, leans upon a broken reed—for it may emphatically be said of them as Paul said of the Jewish and Gentile world in his time, “they have all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.”

Under these considerations, it becomes every one to endeavour to know for himself what are the requirements of his Maker, and attend to the convictions of duty in his own mind. In doing this he will soon perceive that his religion must be of another kind, and that he must walk in a very different way from the great body of religious professors in the present day. To talk about religion, and to profess religion, has become quite fashionable, and furnishes no evidence that a man possesses one particle of it in his own breast, or is any better than a knave or a cheat.

The *tree* can be known only by its *fruit*. And it is indispensable to a Christian to be faithful to his word, to be honest, and to do as he would be done unto, in every transaction with his fellow men. If every one who names the name of Christ, would comply strictly with these requirements, how much disquietude, anxiety, and misery, would be prevented, and how much of the reproach now attached to the Christian name would be removed.

Notwithstanding the great boast of the spread of the Gospel, and the zeal and doings of the present age, perhaps there was never a time when the essential requirements of Christianity were less attended to, or the Gospel operated with so little force on the hearts of men. Some of our most high toned religious and missionary publications, at times,

are constrained to witness to this truth, although to secure the favour of the people, and promote their own interest, their chief employment in general, like the false prophets of old, is to *prophesy smooth things*. The following is extracted from the *Religious Remembrancer*, printed in this city, and edited by a clergyman of the Presbyterian order.

“ Sinners have become sermon-proof, gospel-hardened, and the ordinary means seem to have less effect than the dropping of water on the flinty rock.”

Mr. Rice, a Presbyterian minister at Richmond, Va. and editor of the *Religious and Literary Magazine*, printed at that place, expresses himself with respect to the present state of the church, in the following words:

“ On turning our thoughts to the condition of the church among us, I think that all must be constrained to acknowledge, that the state of morals is low. There is not that sensibility of conscience, that nice conception of right and wrong, that shrinking from evil, that high sense of the claims of justice, that abhorrence of selfishness, which ought to characterize the professed disciples of the Lord Jesus. Indeed the subject of Christian morals seems to be but little understood by Christians.

“ I am ashamed when I hear Christians boast that they have got the *best* of a bargain. Why, a professor of religion ought never to act so that any person would be *warranted* to say, he had the advantage. All dealings should be on terms of reciprocity, of perfect fairness. And Christians ought to transact business in such a way, that all parties may have advantage in their bargains.

“ The lives of professing Christians do more injury to the cause, than the Devil and all his legions. The religion of Christ will triumph, will ‘have free course and be glorified,’ when the disciples live so, that they ‘who are of the contrary part are ashamed, having no evil thing to say of them.’ And until this shall be the case, so many stumbling blocks will lie in the way, that the progress of the best cause in the world will be greatly impeded.”

To adduce any arguments to prove the correctness of the foregoing remarks, is deemed wholly superfluous. They

force their own conviction on the minds of those who are not destitute of understanding, and who have but a superficial acquaintance with the moral actions and practices of men in the present day. It remains, therefore, for each one to endeavour to amend and correct the faults and aberrations from rectitude in himself. If there could be as many brought to engage in this good and profitable work, as are engaged in missionary and other schemes of the day, we might then indulge a pleasing expectation that the reign of righteousness would speedily commence on the earth. But when those who make the greatest outward display of religion, and show so much zeal for the spread of the Gospel, are no better than the Scribes and Pharisees of old, what grounds are there to believe that the world will be made any better by all they do.

Christians, who are styled the *salt of the earth*, must possess the *savoury spirit* and *practice of the Gospel*; otherwise their works and doings will be of no avail in correcting the morals and practices of others. Destitute of these essential qualities for improving mankind, agreeably to the words of Christ with respect to *salt* that has lost its *savour*, they are *good for nothing*, but fit only to be cast out of the pale of the visible church, and to be disregarded of men.

The apostle Paul is very expressive on the subject of right conduct in professors of Christianity, and enjoined it on his brethren not to keep company with such pretended followers of Christ as did not walk agreeably to the moral requirements of Christianity; directing them not even to eat with them. If this command of the apostle were put into execution in this day against all hireling priests who make merchandise of the Gospel, and all that are covetous and act dishonestly towards others, and such as indulge in vanity and pride, the community of Christians in fellowship with each other, would be reduced to a very small number; and many who now rank high and take the lead in religious matters, and manifest great zeal for converting others, would have to set about the work of conversion in themselves, before they could get into the sheepfold of Christ, or enjoy the society and fellowship of the faithful; and the stigma and disgrace, moreover, brought upon Christianity by means of improper characters, would cease.

*For the Reformer.*

On the last day of July, I attended in the Freemason's Hall, Philadelphia, to see and hear the exercises, when the students of the Pennsylvania University, twenty-three in number, received the degree of Bachelor of Arts; seventeen, that of A. M.; two others, "honorary degrees of Doctor of Divinity;" two others, "honorary degrees of Doctor of Medicine;" and one more honorary degree of A. M. The exercises were introduced by a band of music, then followed a prayer, delivered by the Provost, from written notes, then the band of music again, next a Latin oration, then several English orations, on different subjects, by the graduates, interspersed with music from the band, and last of all, a long valedictory oration. The author of the latter, in a pathetic address to the authorities of the University, to the audience, and to his classmates, made known, that as they had long enjoyed a very friendly intercourse in the prosecution of their studies, they were now, in the order of time, constrained to separate, and to embark in the arduous and uncertain duties of business. It was already known; he said, that some of them would apply to Law, and others to Divinity, &c. &c. He thanked the Provost, who is a clerical character, for directing the class in the way of virtue and religion, and hoped, as so laudable an example had been set, it would be improved to their edification and advantage by an imitation of it. This panegyric apparently afforded the Provost much gratification. In the course of it he also addressed himself to the literati; the judges, professors, clergy, &c.

When I cast my eyes around and saw the arrangements of the day for the gratification of these various descriptions of people; the band of music, with its fascinating and melodious tones; the habit and prayers of the Provost, to give solemnity and dignity to the occasion, and the students to attract the gaze and admiration of the whole audience, I could not fail to observe how well the whole was designed to please the taste of the present age. I could not but reflect however, with astonishment, on the depravity and blindness of distinguished orders of men, as to a knowledge of the Scriptures. Can such men, said I to myself, with all their great attainments, wish, or dare they be called Christians? What! the most distinguished characters in such an institu-

tion lend their aid to make religion a mere farce on such an occasion, and express joy and gratification at the grossest flattery bestowed on them for having it? Well methinks it is said, "They honour me with their lips, but their heart is far from me"—"These things are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes"—"Their understandings are darkened, and their hearts hardened, that they cannot see the truth."

In casting my eyes again on an interesting portion of this audience, the heedless and unthinking youths of both sexes, and carrying my views into futurity, in anticipating the common nature of habits, institutions, and prejudices, which are approved by parents and friends, and confirmed by time, I could not but deplore the pernicious tendency of such examples, which, by constantly infusing themselves into all the actions of life, must contaminate, and perhaps ultimately ruin our national character. The plastic hand of time and example will mould and form any thing as may be desired. *As the twig is bent the tree's inclin'd.* It is of small moment whether people are Pagans, Mahometans, Catholics, Episcopilians, Presbyterians, or Unitarians, when they are conformed to this world, and their religious exercises are only adapted to charm and please the carnal mind. It is impossible to read the Scriptures of the New Testament with sincere and honest views, and believe they tolerate and justify such practices as those we are speaking of. It is totally irreconcileable with the whole tenor of them to pretend to connect the genuine devotion of the heart with such a concert of instrumental music, as is used for balls and theatres. They who worship God are required to do it in spirit and in truth; but this is a solemn mockery of it, as is also much of what is called worship in the present day.

All our Universities, Colleges, Academies, and Seminaries of Learning, for directing the education of youth, are tending one way and to one point. The impressions made and inculcated in them are carried into our Theological Seminaries. Here those of different tenets can unite and prepare themselves together, under the same Professors, to propagate their conflicting and antichristian doctrines to make merchandise of the gospel. And to crown this work of wickedness, it is said, that because common views and feelings

are assimilating them to each other, it is an evidence of the pure and growing state of religion in this country. True it is, in a way that is fast preparing it for chains and slavery, if political and other occurrences favour a completion of the vast designs of a proud hierarchy fast springing up and spreading its influence through our land. A VIRGINIAN.

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*For the Reformer.*

*Messrs. Editors,—* Let me ask, of what possible use or purpose are steeples, or spires, or towers, or bells, to places of worship, such as those recently put up in this ‘good city?’ Of what use are painted representations of theatrical curtains, as in the church of holy James, in Seventh street, and other places of public worship, as they are termed? And why are churches called or named after persons who were among the earliest of the disciples, eighteen hundred years ago? Why is it necessary to name them at all, otherwise than by the street in which they are found? And why do the ministers of *some* denominations wear silk gowns, and all wear *black* dresses? Is it because there is any religious or moral act contained or implied therein or thereby? These persons, I fear, consider religion as a substance, a thing that can be taken hold of by the hands, and measured and dealt out as you deal out any article of produce;—for they sometimes talk of being deprived of their religion—and in Wm. Pitt’s reign, at the commencement of the French wars, it was always an argument in favour of that war, that they were to defend their “holy religion,”—that they “were fighting for their religion,” and so on, as if a political enemy could run away with it as with forage for their horses!!! Strange infatuation of mankind—for if religion be seated in the *mind*, the *soul*, the *heart*, and if it consist principally in an intercourse between our mind or spirit and its Creator and Redeemer, how can it be taken away from us by external power or force? But in our day, every thing relating to the religion of the far greater part of the Christian world, is to be made a matter of *spectacle*, of external pomp, of show, and of solemn nonsense. The senses only are to be appealed to constantly, and the soul thereby deprived of its most proper mode of intercourse with its eternal Creator and Preserver—

that of self-retirement, of meditation, and of secret intercourse. Our modern clergy are most surely putting us back to the Jewish dispensation times, and are reviving and holding perpetually up to view, those types and shadows which were to be, and which were, actually abrogated by the Gospel dispensation.

Thus, we are told how solemn and imposing were the scenes on such an occasion—on one, for instance, the striking up of the organ in its most ample tones—in a way similar no doubt to the constant practice of the church of Rome; in another, that the consecration of a new church was attended by certain ceremonies that were “very interesting and impressive;” on a third, in the instance of some Right Reverend Bishop *performing*, as it is termed, the holy rite of confirmation, it is set forth in the public prints as a spectacle of a solemn and grand description! And our papers often invite us to attend some stated public service, which, on some particular occasion, is to be *performed* by some celebrated actor in divine things!

Gracious heaven! When will mankind learn sense, and see through the flimsy veil of such useless trash? When will they reflect that no external *performances* whatever, however gaudy and pompous may be their description, will avail them any thing in the sight of the great I AM? Will they never see that there is not, *cannot be*, in these imposing externals, any moral act whatever, nor any religion—that the intercourse with our Maker and Redeemer can only be held by the soul, chiefly in self-retirement, by introversion of mind, by contemplation and prayer—to all which these external and meretricious exhibitions of pageantry are an obstacle, a positive bar? The assumption, by any set or class of men, of the term Reverend or Divine, must be allowed to be highly presumptuous, as being founded solely on the circumstance of their having gone through a course of studies, and having the hands of some other pretended Reverends or Right Reverends laid on their heads during the public *performance* of some antichristian and absurd ceremonies!

When will mankind, may I again ask, become freed of these unmeaning and absurd superstitions.

STAT NOMINIS UMBRA.

[*Paragraphs for the Reformer.*.]

CHURCH ORNAMENTS, though perhaps among the most harmless appendages of the religion of the present day, have a mighty influence to cheat the mind even of a sincere worshipper; in proof of this, take the following example. A female *tourist*, by the name of *Stothard*, in her journal, has the following description of a famous cathedral church,\* in France—reiterated in magazines, &c. “The interior is so imposingly beautiful, that on entering the aisles the mind is struck with an involuntary awe; the sombre light reflected through the windows filled with figures, the size of life, some of various and fantastic ornaments whose brilliant hues are so gorgeous and dazzling, that their variety and luminous brilliancy forbids the eye long to rest upon one object, the majestically fretted roof, the high vaulted arches, all combine to strike the beholder with that feeling of veneration, and to inspire that disposition towards serious contemplation, which does indeed so well prepare the mind for devotional exercise.† We are naturally susceptible of powerful impressions from external things, and our feelings are capable of being softened, exalted, and refined, by the contemplation of majestic and imposing objects. There was, undoubtedly, great wisdom in the erection of such buildings for religious purposes, for, who can enter them without feeling they are most proper to be devoted to the worship of a Divine Being.”

This kind of *devotion* is like that of a clergyman, who, in defence of “sacred music,” in my hearing, said, that “whenever he was present at a military parade, (as chaplain I suppose) as soon as the music *struck up*, he was filled with a *devotional spirit.*” A person replied, “this is not the *devotion* of the gospel, but of the natural heart—void of reflection; for, if reason alone were in exercise, the thoughts of *war* and *bloodshedding* would have stifled the shrill music of the drum and fife, and filled thy mind with horror and disgust.” And had the authoress of the foregoing rhapsody reflected on the ignorance, superstition, and mental slavery, of the thousands

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\* Since reduced to a heap of ruins by fire from the clouds.

† Is not this the very language of our clergy, if not in words, yet more forcibly, in practice—witness their *scarlet* and *crimsoned pulpits*—the colour, if not the very *mark*, of the *apocalyptic beast*.

whose money and labour had been employed in the rearing and decorating that monument of human pride, her heart would have sickened, and her eyes would have closed on its fading splendours.

But some may reply—"Was not the temple (built by Solomon) highly decorated?"—Yea!!—but not a stone of it is to be seen—it has passed away like "the shadowy worship of the legal dispensation at the rising of the gospel sun;"—and even whilst the temple was in being, an upper room in a private house, the open field, or the shores of a lake, were as acceptable to the true worshippers, and so continued to be esteemed, until "the falling away," had descended to so low a degree, in the early part of the third century, that Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, so called, having seized on the heathen temples, prevailed on his fawning clergy, with great pomp and worldly glory, to consecrate, or dedicate them, (as many of our sects yet do) with all their *decorations*, and much additional *trumpery* of his own. And, as if these were not sufficiently numerous, other splendid edifices were erected and dedicated in a similar way, as the following extract from *Mosheim's Church History* will show:

"No sooner had Constantine the Great abolished the worship of the Pagan idols, than magnificent churches were every where erected for the Christians, which were richly adorned with pictures and images that bore a striking resemblance to the Pagan temples, and which were consecrated with great pomp, and with certain rights borrowed from the ancient laws of the Roman pontiffs." *Mosheim*, vol. i. p. 383.

I have somewhere read an author, who, speaking of the Missionaries from the Pope of Rome to China, says, "They so far assimilated their worship to that of the country, that it was hard to tell whether their proselytes had turned Christians, or the Missionaries Pagans." And it seems that some of our Protestant Missionaries are equally accommodating, in adopting the style of heathen priests, and complying with heathen customs. See Judson's relation of himself and companion's kneeling with folded hands, before "*the golden face*," at "*the golden feet*" of the Burman Emperor, and the petition they prepared and presented to that "*Royal Supporter of Religion, and Lord of land and water*." Whether this is the case with the English Missionaries at the Otaheitan,

and the Bostonian ones at the Sandwich Islands, I am not prepared to say.

Again, says *Mosheim*, vol. iii. p. 78, "The Roman pontiffs would not suffer any doctrines that had the smallest tendency to diminish their despotic authority, but obliged the teachers to interpret every precept of Christianity, in such manner as to render them subservient to the support of Papal dominion and tyranny; and this order was backed with the formidable arguments of fire and sword; and all those who presumed to place the authority of the Gospel above that of the Pope, received death in the most cruel forms."

"The priests and monks finding it their interest to keep the people in the grossest ignorance, dazzled their eyes with the ludicrous pomp of a gaudy worship, and led them to place the whole of religion in vain ceremonies, bodily austerities and exercises; and particularly in a blind and stupid veneration for the clergy."

"The rich, who gave money to build new churches or to embellish the old, were looked upon by the multitude as the happiest of mortals and intimate friends of the Most High, whilst the poor contributed their bodily labours, and cheerfully performed the part of beasts of burden; being employed in carrying stones and drawing waggons, by which, and the worship of saints, they expected to obtain eternal salvation."

A LAYMAN.

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[The candour and sincerity evinced by the writer of the following communication, entitle it to a place in this publication. The writer resides in the upper part of the state of New York.]

*For the Reformer.*

I presume there are but few, even among the leaders of the different denominations, but will readily acknowledge that the church of Rome and the churches which first succeeded her, have departed from the simplicity of the Gospel, and gone into many errors and abominations; and yet, strange it is that others which come after them run into the same things in substance, even the latest denominations. It is well known, that the different denominations when they first made their appearance, bore a faithful testimony against the pride and wickedness among professing Christians, and enjoyed the life and power of religion. And while they

were few in number, sincere and humble, the Lord loved them and prospered them in their endeavours to make mankind better. But as they increased in numbers they decreased in humility, and soon began to build the things they once destroyed, and each in their turn have desired a king, to be like other nations. It is also to be noticed that all the different orders have brought along with them more or less of the merchandise of Babylon, or the commandments and doctrines of men; and I often say to myself, Oh, that I could see a church in that purity and simplicity designed by the author of the Christian religion.

When I first experienced religion, (which was about sixteen years ago,) I united with the close order of Baptists, but soon found myself in bondage; and, after living in bondage two years, I separated myself from them for the sake of liberty. About this time I heard there was a church in Boston that had no other name but Christian, and no articles of faith but the Bible; and held a free communion with all the saints; and that they were determined to lay aside all the commandments and doctrines of men, and attend to all the commands of God, &c.—and my heart leaped for joy, and I exclaimed, These are the very people I want to see—But I knew not that there were any in the state of New York. Now, as I stood alone and felt determined not to go into bondage again, a brother-in-law of mine standing in the same situation, with a number more, we united together, and agreed to leave all the commands, doctrines, and traditions of men, and search the Scriptures, and pray to God for light; and attend to all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, according to the best light we could obtain.—And under great persecution with the tongue, the Lord added to our number.

In a few years the Lord began to send the preachers from the people in the east, that I had heard of; and I believe the Lord was with them of a truth; for they preached the Gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; and reformation spread wherever they went. They then preached against associations of churches, ecclesiastical courts, creeds, confessions of faith, teaching for hire, &c. They were then willing to suffer for Christ's sake, and look to God for their reward. And perhaps no former sect has in-

creased with such rapidity. But, alas! they in their turn have desired a king, to be like other nations, (as I view the subject) for, within a few years they have formed their General Conferences; and, strange to tell, they begin to build the things they once destroyed—for the preachers (not every one, for I believe a few of them mean to stand fast in the simplicity of the Gospel,) begin to want to know what the churches will give them per year to preach for them—and one of them told me he had done wrong in preaching against hireling preachers, or words to that import; and what is still more surprising, (if I am rightly informed) at their General Conference last fall, in the eastern part of this state, they passed a vote that the Conference should be composed hereafter of preachers and deacons—heretofore it was preachers and brethren. Oh! how soon is the most fine gold changed. If things go on so there will soon be another coming out from them, for I trust the Lord has reserved a few among them that have not, nor will not, bow the knee to Baal.

*One that is opposed to all Popery.*

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[The following statements are communicated by a person of responsibility, in Oneida county, New York, who pledges his name for their accuracy.]

*For the Reformer.*

In a neighbouring town a poor Indian, some distance from his home, was taken sick. Application was made by his wife to a physician (a member of a religious society, and strong advocate for sending missionaries among the heathen) to visit him. There was not a probability of much temporal reward, and this professed Christian and friend of the heathen, would not condescend to see him, although he was to pass within a few rods of the barn that sheltered this son of the forest. But little previous to this, the same Doctor was in a measure instrumental in getting the women of his neighbourhood assembled at his house, for the purpose of bringing in and making clothing for poor heathen Indians more remote. Application was now made to another physician, who does not contribute for foreign missionary purposes, and of course is called unbeliever, enemy to the Gospel, &c. This last very readily visited the sick Indian, and administered to his relief.

Another piece of information is in justice due to the public, for the truth of which I will be responsible. If it is required of Christians to support Theological Students, it may be a means of saving both time and money, if those contributing for these purposes, would, in no instance, send any article of ready made clothing, except it be of the newest fashion; and nothing intended to be made into wearing apparel, but what is of superior quality. I know of more than one instance where these Divinity Students (so called) have taken hats from the repository of contributions, worth from two dollars and fifty cents to three dollars, and because they were not of the newest fashion in shape, have paid from one dollar to one dollar and twenty cents, at a neighbouring store, in exchange for others not considered of any better quality. Indeed one of them acknowledged it was only gratifying pride to pay the difference in exchange, as he believed the one he wished to part with would do the most service.— Again, I have known family manufactured woollen cloth exchanged for other, at a difference of from five to six dollars a yard.

There is not only a loss of property by paying so much in exchange, but the time of these young men cannot be very profitably occupied in the study of Divinity, whilst they have such perplexing inconveniences to absorb their attention, lest they should appear clad in something not the prim etiquette of the day. And is not this all chargeable to those who contribute of coarse or unfashionable things for (as they say) the service of the Lord.

I do not desire to accuse unjustly; perhaps some of "their penury have cast in all their living." I will relate one instance. A woman, in an adjoining county, in very indigent circumstances, the mother of several children, who were nearly barefoot, was, out of compassion for the little sufferers, presented with a fleece of wool by another woman, for the purpose of making them stockings. About this time a call was made for missionaries abroad, and this pious mother (to use her own expression) divided the fleece of wool between herself and the Lord, by giving one half to the missionaries.

*A Friend to Missionaries called and sent by the only qualifying power which sent Paul to the Gentile world formerly.*

*For the Reformer.*

Having just read the four first numbers of “The Crimes of the Clergy, or the Pillars of Priestcraft shaken,” I feel sensible that reformation is necessary not only in Great Britain, where this periodical paper has this year commenced, but throughout christendom. W. Benbow, at Byron’s head, Castle street, Leicester square, appears to be the printer and publisher. In his prefacial remarks he says, “It will be our painful task to record many who are lovers of themselves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having the *form* of godliness but denying the *power*,” &c. These priests after the order of Melchisideck, in their own estimation, exercise the right to take tythes of all the English possess;—though the church is filled with many who are the *dumb dogs*, spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, who will not bark to save the vineyard that feeds them, and who can never have enough. They undertake the cure of souls by proxy;—and hold livings, from which they derive immense profits, that they have never seen: for pluralities and non-residences are permitted. “Inferior ministers,” says this writer, “are nearly one and all selfish and corrupt; fleecing their flocks and not feeding them. Dissipation of the most extravagant kind, has spread through all branches of the church established and sectarian. And crimes among them do more injury to Christianity, than the writings of Bollingbroke, Hume, Voltaire, and Paine.

“When laymen petitioned against tythes, the embryo parsons, studying at Cambridge, sallied forth against the assembly of the laymen, and fought,” says the publisher, “not only with their *Bibles*, but with the *force of arms*. \* \* \* \* In this shameful contest, the sucking parsons have shown their contempt of the laws of the land, and the rights of the subject.”

Those who are in favour of a hireling ministry, ought to read the account of the first hireling priest, on record in Judges, ch. xvii. & xviii. He was covetous, idolatrous, ambitious, and thievish;—as those chapters will prove. And every hireling minister ought to contemplate their origin in Micah’s priest.

BETA.

[*Extract of a letter from Harrison county, Ohio.*]

“ I have lately been gratified with the perusal of a few numbers of the *Reformer*, and believing that the signs of the times are ominous of a very extensive clerical influence in our country, I was much pleased to find a publication so well calculated to arrest the progress of this many-headed monster, (if I may be indulged the expression) and to open the eyes of the people before we become so completely entangled in the trammels of priestcraft, as to be only able to hug the chains and acquiesce in our fate. I view, and long have viewed the exertions that are making in the eastern states, and indeed of late in our own, as being likely at some future day, to endanger the civil and religious liberty of our country; and in fact, I now have my fears that it is a hobby on which many ride into office at the present day. This view of it, independent of any other, ought to be a sufficient excitement to a vigilant watchfulness and exertion on the part of those who have the welfare of their country at heart.

“ But there is another view of the subject, which, as Christians, we should feel more particularly interested in—I mean this missionary mania, or the practice we are in of sending out men into the heathen world, under the dignified character of evangelical ministers, and who profess to have no other object in view than the propagation of the gospel of a crucified Saviour, and the advancement of his kingdom; but who are working their way into every part of the habitable globe, carrying with them and propagating those prejudices and sectarian dogmas, that have been the source of so much dissension and bloodshed among those professing the Christian name, and who, it is to be feared, have experienced but little of the benign influence of that religion which they profess to be the zealous propagators of; so that I verily believe that the present means that are so warmly recommended, and zealously pursued, and to which many pious and well disposed people are contributing, are the best that have ever been devised for the setting up and establishing of the kingdom of antichrist in this world.

“ The Redeemer says, ‘*my kingdom is not of this world;*’ but what are the materials that compose this mighty fabric that is to extend ‘from the further India to the setting sun?’ Princes of this world must superintend it—the learning and applause of this world must promote it—the worthless dust

of this world must be gathered up, from the equator to the pole, to support it—the ministers of its altars must be learned in the wisdom of this world—and in fact it appears to be entirely a worldling, and to have none of the requisites of the gospel kingdom."

[*From a Correspondent in Geauga county, Ohio.*] ]

"The Missionaries located at Fort Meigs, on the Maumee river, (of whom something has been heretofore said in the Reformer) are unremitting in their exertions to collect contributions, for building up what they call Christ's kingdom among the poor perishing heathen. Nothing can exceed their assurance and perseverance—they talk and blush not—they run and tire not. They represent the harvest as truly plenteous, but the labourers to be in a state of starvation and wretchedness, and continue to call most urgently upon the friends of Emmanuel to come forward and lend freely to the Lord, as without their assistance the great cause of religion, so far as respects the Maumee mission, must utterly fail. This address, hackneyed and threadbare as it is, with the weak and credulous is nevertheless sufficient; and among other comfortable things, barrels of flour, with the missionary brand, and the names of the donors thereon, are now forwarding to prevent starvation in a land which if not literally flowing with milk and honey, yet abounding as much as any other in the substantial articles of living.

"We learn by a letter from a gentleman of veracity at Maumee, that an appraisement of the missionary property at that station was lately made, when it amounted to the snug sum of something upwards of ten thousand five hundred dollars, exclusive of the gleaning of the grapes for the present year, which have not yet been received into the wine-press; and also exclusive of all expenses hitherto incurred, which, in the whole, must be a very heavy tax on the community. In return for which, they have the satisfaction of being told that the cause is advancing, the prospects good, that an interesting and important school is organized and established within the first year, consisting of three papooses; and this is to compensate the people for those vast sums wrung from industry and weak credulity, and worse than thrown away upon the drones and cut-worms of the nation."

## FOR THE REFORMER.

[Extract from the *Mercantile Advertiser*, July 4, 1823.]

"SAILING OF THE MISSIONARIES.—On Sunday afternoon last Mrs. Judson, together with the Rev. Jonathan Wade and his companion, who had been approved and set apart by the Board as assistants in the Mission at Burmah, embarked in the ship Edward Newton, captain Bertody, bound to Calcutta.—At 7 o'clock the stately ship with all her sails unfurled, turned her prow to the ocean, and commenced her long career, carrying in her bosom a burden more precious than all the wealth of India—the heralds of salvation to benighted Burmah."

The above inflated annunciation of the departure of the Burmah Missionaries partakes more of eastern pomp than Christian simplicity. But the style is much the least offensive part—the bold and immodest assertion, that "she bears in her bosom the heralds of salvation to benighted Burmah," deserves the most severe reprobation, because we have not a particle of evidence that they have been sent by any higher authority than mammon, or allureed by any stronger motive than gold.

To be serious, Messrs. Editors, there is a spirit in our country as blind and infatuated as ever stimulated the ancient crusaders, and will undoubtedly lead the people into the same folly. Swarms of these sectarian pioneers, under the auspices of various societies, are extracting money from the superstitious and ignorant, under pretence of saving the souls of the heathen, when there is every reason to believe that these pretended heralds, and those who follow them, will all fall into the ditch.

Whether this party intend to imitate the Serampore Missionaries, time alone will determine. Certain it is that one of the lady heralds attached to the party, is well acquainted with the facts hinted at, from whom Messrs. Bethune & Colgate might have obtained some information respecting the most "pure Christians they ever knew," which would cause them to be more careful how they identify themselves with mendicant confessors, or lay folly at the door of those who expose their jesuitical acts and designs.

F,

New York, July 10, 1823.

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[From the *New England Galaxy* of July 25th.]

MRS. JUDSON, the wife of A. Judson, a famous missionary in the East Indies, sailed from Boston a short time since, where she had been to visit her friends, and collect MONEY

from the pious and charitable, to aid her in distributing the bread of life to the poor heathen of Asia. A lady, who was in habits of familiar intercourse with Mrs. Judson, and to whom application was made for charity, in her behalf, informs us, that the *visiting dress* of this *self-denying* female missionary could not be valued at less than TWELVE HUNDRED DOLLARS!! The reader may be startled at the mention of such an enormous amount laid out in a *single* dress to decorate the person of one whose affections are professedly set on heavenly things, and despising the vain and gaudy allurements of the world; it appeared to us incredible, till we heard from the lady some of the details. The Cashmere shawl was valued at 600 dolls.; the Leghorn flat 150 dolls.; lace trimming on the gown 150 dolls. &c.; jewelry would soon make up the sum, leaving *necessary* articles of clothing out of the question. We hope the next edition of the missionary arithmetic will inform us how many infants were robbed of their innocent, if not necessary, playthings, how many widows had denied themselves the use of sugar in tea and butter on bread, how many poor debtors had robbed their creditors and laboured without stockings and shoes, to furnish out this modern representative of the mystical Babylon.

[The foregoing article appeared in the *Galaxy* more than a month since, and has been inserted in the *United States Gazette*, and several other papers. Having seen nothing in any of our missionary prints to disprove the statements, we take it for granted that their correctness is not questioned.]

#### *A New Invention for Missionary purposes.*

A MISSIONARY WHEEL! has lately been established at Hartford, Connecticut. The *Boston Recorder*, in speaking of this new project for raising Missionary Funds, observes: "The *Missionary Wheel* in Hartford, for the purpose of giving ladies, who may have leisure, an opportunity to spin for the benefit of Missions, is respectfully noticed, and generally approved, in political papers. Perhaps this simple design, like the *Missionary Field*, will become a source of great revenue to the cause of missions." The following is copied from the *Connecticut Courant*, printed at Hartford.

#### MISSIONARY WHEEL!

It is desired to be made public, that a Wheel and open room, are kept at the house of Mr. George White, Church Street, for the use of those ladies who wish to contribute to the small streams which compose the broad river of Missionary support. Happening in at the house of Mrs. P. between the hours of nine and ten in the evening, I was surprised and gra-

tified by beholding the respectable mistress of the mansion, turning the wheel and plying the distaff, with all the grace and agility of five and twenty. On inquiry, I found that this venerable mother in Israel, in the 84th year of her age, wished to encourage, by her example, the laudable work. Sisters! have we any thing to object to this easy mode of contributing our mite to the raising funds to assist in spreading the "glad tidings of salvation" in heathen lands.

While numbers are honourably engaged in cultivating the Missionary Field, it is hoped that the ladies (though their exertions prove less valuable) will neglect no opportunity of showing their attachment to the cause of all others the most important.

Donations of Flax will be gratefully received by the well wishers to the object.

A FRIEND TO MISSIONS.

[*From the Concord Observer.*]

*The Missionary Wheel.*—The ingenuity for which Yankees are proverbial, has never perhaps been exercised to a greater extent, or in ways more various and diversified, than in devising means for raising and equipping missionaries and missionary establishments. When the subject was first started in this country, innumerable societies and ramifications of societies, were got up in almost every part of the Union. Every town and village (not excepting our own) had its Cent Society, its Rag Society, &c. &c. with numberless auxiliaries, and the avails of a thousand subscriptions to which the members subjected themselves, were most punctually forwarded to the person who acted as agent for the heathen nations. A book appeared every month or two, containing the names of the pious donors, and announcing that so much of their money had been sent to *Bombay*, so much to *Seringapatam*, and other places on the most remote parts of the eastern continent, for the support of missionaries and their wives,—and this was generally all the information furnished on the subject to those who had thus parted with their substance. \* \* \* 'Missionary Boxes' started up in various places, appearing first in churches, but afterwards finding their way into private houses; and one could scarce enter a parlour without being stared at by 'MISSIONARY BOX,' in gold letters, on the mantlepiece, or in some other conspicuous situation. After this expedient had lost its novelty, a sort of Savings Bank was instituted, in which children, young and old, were encouraged to make deposits from *savings* made by abstinence from some article of food or dress. Then followed the cultivation of 'Missionary Fields.' \* \* \*

We have been led to these remarks, from seeing in a late *Connecticut* paper that a *Missionary Wheel* was established at Hartford, where pious females may spin for the benefit of the heathen. Contributions of *flax* are solicited. Now we know not how this may appear to others, but to ourselves it seems to be bordering on the ridiculous. The plan of civilizing and christianizing the heathen world, is in itself, great and noble, though many considerate reflecting persons deem it a chimerical project, from which no good can be expected. But if it is to be accomplished, we are of opinion that it never will be done by such mean and contemptible artifices as are often resorted to, for the purpose of fleecing the rich and stripping the poor.

[From the *New England Galaxy* of August 15.]

### ANOTHER SCHEME TO DEFRAUD THE PUBLIC.

"Now let there be, in some central part of the town, a MISSIONARY STALL, kept by some pious old woman, who would thereby get her living in Summer—let those who cultivate gardens send thither their superfluous fruits, vegetables, garden seeds, lettuce, asparagus, radishes, melons split open, cucumbers, gooseberries, plums, and cherries, which the birds carry off. Even the young lady, who has only a box of earth in her parlour window, by cultivating geraniums, hyacinths, monthly roses, &c. might dispose of enough in a year, almost to educate a heathen child. Even trimmings of currants, grapes, and flowering shrubs, and scions of the finest pears and apples, might be sold to the country people, or bartered for produce which would sell, &c. &c. I am sure the thing can be done."—*Christian Mirror*.

Surely there can be no human employment in which so much ingenuity, and fertility of invention, are displayed, as in the business of sponging the public of their money for missionary purposes. The pittance earned by the sweat of the brow is wrenched from the poor—the harmless rattle snatched from the hand of the infant—the food arrested on its passage to the mouth of the hungry—the sick are deprived of their restoratives; and the little enjoyments that would serve to eke out the remnant of existance in tolerable ease, are taken from those who are borne down by the weight of years. But this is not enough. It is not sufficient that all classes in society, from the highest to the lowest, should contribute to support the missionary in his luxury, and to dress out the missionary's wife in her extravagance, but the very birds of the air are to be rendered subservient to these worse than useless purposes. The few berries provided for their support by Him, without whose knowledge not a sparrow falleth to the ground, are to be added to the mass of plunder, accumulated for the *ostensible* purpose of "educating the heathen child," but which is *really* applied to disseminate the most unreasonable and unnatural sectarian opinions, and to support many a worthless person, who might be better employed in trailing a wheelbarrow through our streets, or in sweeping our chimnies. A *Missionary Stall!* Some old woman to be employed to retail split-open melons, and plums and cherries, which the *birds carry off!* Contemptible artifices! Is it possible that the Omnipotent Ruler of the Universe, who rides upon the storm and the whirlwind, and holds the mighty waters in the hollow of his hand, can have condescended to stake the eternal happiness or misery of His creatures upon such paltry contrivances? The very thought is sacrilegious.

[From the *American Eagle* of June 30th, printed at Litchfield, Connecticut.]

In the last Boston Recorder is an article copied from the Christian Herald, which, in speaking of the various Missionary and other institutions of the present day, says, "they are all pouring their tributary streams into the MIGHTY RIVER OF GOD !!!"

*River of God!!* What, are the streams of bank bills, or certificates of deposit, or bags of Spanish milled dollars, flowing into the hands of the Board of Foreign Missions, &c. are they forming the *river of God?*

But, saying nothing of this *profane* use of God's name, as some will consider it, how much longer can such wild, hectic, and inflammatory suggestions be weekly flashed in the face of the public, before the sober, thinking part of the community, not carried along with the current, will believe that *some* engaged in the cause have become as absolutely phrenzied and fanatical as they were in the days of Peter the Hermit and St. Bernard?

Indeed, a Baptist Missionary paper has already recommended the adoption of the memorable words, as a motto, that were adopted by this Peter the Hermit, and Pope Adrian II. to rally their forces when the first crusade was preached. The words thus used in the crusades, and now suggested for rallying Missionaries of the present day, were *Deus vult*, "God wills it."

As by the help of this motto on the standard of the cross, and pronounced from man to man, Peter and the Pope rallied together, in a few months, nearly *one million of men* of all distinctions, including noblemen, princes, clergymen, and *women* dressed in men's attire, ready to go and take Jerusalem from the Turks: so a portion of the community will believe that this Baptist paper, knowing its effects then, laid hold of this same motto now, as a rallying symbol, or means to collect a million of dollars, or whatever sum might be obtained; while others will charge it entirely to the *head*, and claim it as evidence of phrenzy and delirium. To the latter perhaps charity inclines us, when we look at the dreadful results which the adoption of that motto, and their mistaken notion of His will, then produced.

The first act they did under this "God wills it," was to murder *twelve thousand* unoffending Jews, on their way to Jerusalem, because their ancestors had crucified the Saviour. And when such as arrived at Jerusalem, after committing every species of enormity, took it from the Turks, with this motto, "God wills it," still glaring on the cross, and ringing from one to the other, they, as historians relate, "put the garrison and inhabitants to the sword without distinction. Arms protected not the brave, or submission the timid. No age or sex was spared. Infants perished by the same sword that pierced their mothers, while imploring mercy. The streets of Jerusalem were covered with slain, and the shrieks of agony or despair resounded from every house, when these triumphant warriors, glutted with slaughter, threw away their arms, yet streaming with blood, and advanced with naked feet and bended knees to the sepulchre of the Prince of Peace! sung anthems to that Redeemer, who had purchased their salvation by his death; and, while dead to the calamities of their fellow-creatures, dissolved in tears for the sufferings of the Messiah!"

Such, then, was the result at that time under the motto, "God wills it." Yet, knowing this, and knowing that in all ages, whatever men, under religious impressions, have supposed to be the will of God, to them it has become His will, and they have acted accordingly,—has this paper, published by the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, suggested the use of it again in the present day.

But, leaving the Baptist Missionary paper, we are led for a moment back to the new river, or new Divinity, mentioned in the two first

named papers. By way of comparison let it be asked, did, or did not, these crusaders in that dark age, honestly believe that physical force, the sword and the scimitar, did constitute the river of God which was to carry back Christianity to Palestine, and spread it among the Infidels? Do, or do not, the Boston Recorder and Herald, in this day of light, honestly believe that treasures of bank bills or dollars, however great, can, without profaning His name, be called the river of God, to spread the gospel among the heathen? If neither of them believed it, then are not both alike dishonest? If both of them believed it, then, taking the Bible for a standard, are not both of them alike infatuated or crazed?

### *Missionary Contributions declining.*

Notwithstanding the numerous and before unheard of projects for raising money for missionary purposes, the *Boston Recorder*, (that oracle of the times) of July 12th, states: "Since the first of September last, it has been found necessary to pay from the Treasury of the *American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*, 10,000 dollars more than has been received in that time, and the amount received during the last three months is less by 5,800 dollars than the amount received during a similar period, ending with June 17, 1822." After this statement, it is observed: "The enlargement of the Sandwich Island and Palestine Missions, creates increased expenditures—and a mission *must* be undertaken to South America;—the present is the favourable moment for ascertaining what may be done there, and for attempting to christianize that vast region of moral darkness.\* Ministers and private Christians are earnestly called upon to consider whether the cause does not demand special efforts—whether they have done all that the Saviour has a right to expect of them—and if they have contributed themselves to the extent of their power, whether they have done what they could to bring others to the same devoted standard of duty."

"A correspondent in the *Vermont Republican*," says the Editor of the *Columbian Star*, "who styles himself 'a Baptist,' has assumed and undertaken to defend the following proposition—'That the great call which is now made for donations to support Colleges and Schools for the education of pious young men for the gospel ministry, is not from heaven, and that the church of God is not, therefore, bound to regard it.'" His communications are addressed to the Baptists of Vermont. The Editor of the *Star*, who

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\* There is perhaps already as great a supply of Priests and meeting-houses in South America, in proportion to the population, as in any part of the world. Whether an order of Priests from New England, to christianize the inhabitants anew would be attended with much benefit, is somewhat doubtful. It is certain it would excite no small surprise and indignation among the Catholic Priests in South America, to be told, the people of that country are yet to be christianized. And should another order of Priests, from this country, go there to establish their creed and form of worship, it would produce a collision of interests and competition of claims which might not easily be restrained within the bounds of Christian moderation, if it did not result in bloodshed.

has sold himself to work for priests and their schemes, and the Columbian College, as Ahab sold himself to work wickedness, thus speaks of the labours of his Baptist brother: "He succeeds very lamely, and will, we are confident, soon learn that his thankless toils have been sadly misdirected. Were we apprehensive that his influence among his brethren is equal to his boldness of assumption and warmth of expression, some exertion would be necessary on our part to prevent the pernicious effects [what *pernicious effects?*] of such sentiments. But we know full well that the Baptists of Vermont are too thoroughly established in the truth, [what *truth?*] to be led aside by those 'who cannot teach and will not learn'"

In this manner is every brother browbeat by sapient editors engaged in the cause of priests, when he ventures to express a sentiment not in accordance with the plans and schemes of the present day.

We have received the first number of a periodical work, printed at Buffalo Creek, Broome county, (Va.) entitled "*The Christian Baptist*," and edited by Alexander Campbell: price one dollar a year. From the specimens furnished by the first number, the work appears to be well conducted and promises to be useful. In addressing his patrons, the Editor states: "This work is not intended to be filled with long accounts of revivals, ordinations, baptisms, reports of Bible and missionary societies, the constitutions and proceedings of cent societies, the election of presidents, vice-presidents and managers, secretaries and treasurers of mite societies, and all such splendid and glorious things as fill the pages of most of the religious publications of the day. We wish to publish such things as will bear to be read a year or two hence, as far as the subject matter is concerned." In an article headed the "*Christian Religion*," speaking of the first Christian assemblies, he observes:

"Their devotion did not diversify itself into the endless forms of modern times. They had no monthly concerts for prayer; no solemn convocations, no great fasts, nor preparation, nor thanksgiving days. Their churches were not fractured into missionary societies, Bible societies, education societies; nor did they dream of organizing such in the world. The head of a believing household was not, in those days, a president, or manager of a board of foreign missions; his wife, the president of some female education society; his eldest son, the recording secretary of some domestic Bible society; his eldest daughter, the corresponding secretary of a mite society; his servant maid, the vice-president of a rag society; and his little daughter, a tutoress of a Sunday school. They knew nothing of the *bobbies* of modern times. *In their church capacity alone they moved.* They neither transformed themselves into any other kind of association, nor did they fracture and sever themselves into divers societies. They viewed the church of Jesus Christ as the scheme of heaven to ameliorate the world; as members of it, they considered themselves bound to do all they could for the glory of God, and the good of men. They dare not transfer to a missionary society, or Bible society, or education society, a *cent* or a *prayer*; lest in so doing they should rob the church of its glory, and exalt the inventions of men above the wisdom of God."

M. Hyde de Neuville, deputy of France, and late minister to this country, in a speech on the budget for the use of 1824, observes: "It is painful to see, gentlemen, that we have yet been able to appropriate for the expense of the clergy, only a sum of 25 millions; and that in this sum but 200,000 francs are devoted for assistance to the communes for repairs, or purchasing churches or parsonages. \* \* \* But think that there are yet thousands of *communes* in France deprived of the aid of religion, and a great many in which the children are born and die without receiving water baptism."

**LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.** Frankford papers state that the Great Council of the Canton of Vaud, has resolved to suspend the law relative to the *Liberty of the Press*. Printers, booksellers, circulating libraries, and reading rooms are to be closely watched by a Censor of the government.

[*New England Galaxy*.]

The London Courier states that the three great Continental powers, composing the Holy Alliance, have withdrawn their ministers from the court of the king of Wirtemburg, expressly stating as their reason, the extended influence of the Carbonari system within that kingdom, which the king has been continually called upon to check, but which, under different pretences, he has refused to do.

A new College has been recently established in Augusta, Kentucky, under the patronage of the Methodist Episcopal church. [S. E. Post.]

Subscribers are requested not to pay to the Agents unless they live in their vicinity. A statement of such payments not being always furnished at this place, the state of their accounts is not known; and instances have occurred where offence has been taken for giving notice that sums were due that had been paid to a distant agent.

#### To Correspondents.

The communication from Erie, Pa. is of too great length to be inserted, nor do we feel warranted to give some of its sentiments publicity in this work. It shall be at the service of such as may be disposed to read it in manuscript.

A. C., Cyril, and Free-man, are received, and will be attended to.

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The Reformer is printed on the first day of each month, at one dollar a year. Letters to be addressed to T. R. GATES, Proprietor and principal Editor, No. 290, North Third Street, Philadelphia. When it is more convenient, persons wishing to subscribe or make payments, may call on the firm of Wm. & Joseph Marot, back of No. 93, Market Street, who will receive remittances and furnish the numbers. Numbers can yet be supplied from the commencement of the work.

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